

**YOUR VOTE
MATTERS
2024**

**A GUIDE TO VOTING AND
ELECTIONS FOR THE MS
COMMUNITY**

Elections:

What is an election?

An Election is when people living in a country vote on who they want to represent them.

Why should I vote?

It is your right to vote.

Voting is important because it gives you a say in who represents you.

If you don't vote, you miss out on having a say in things like healthcare, social welfare, laws, education, and jobs.

To vote in Ireland, you must be registered to vote. Visit www.checktheregister.ie or scan the QR code to find out how to register or change your details.



Who can I vote for?

Residents of Ireland have the opportunity to vote for individuals to fulfill various roles:

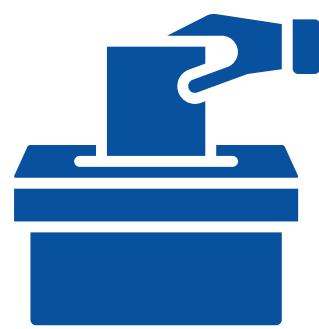
Councillors: These individuals work within your community, and all residents in Ireland can vote for them.

TDs (Teachta Dála): TDs represent people from specific regions known as constituencies.

They are members of Dáil Éireann, which is the parliament in Ireland.

TDs advocate for the interests of people in their area or constituency at the national level.

Both Irish and British residents living in Ireland have the right to vote for TDs.



MEPs: MEPs operate in the European Union, collaborating with representatives from other European countries.

All EU residents in Ireland can vote for MEPs.

The President: The President serves as the head of state in Ireland, holding the position for a maximum of 7 years.

The President resides in *Áras an Uachtaráin* and conducts a significant portion of their work from there.

Scan the QR code to learn more about the government system in Ireland:



What should I expect before the Election?

Leading up to an election, you'll notice posters featuring individuals running for election – these individuals are known as candidates.

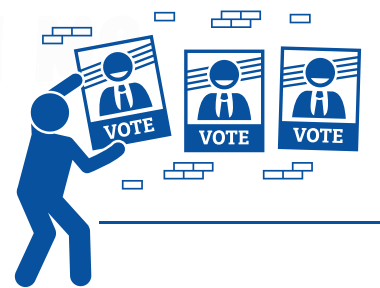
Additionally, you'll receive leaflets through your letterbox.

Candidates will also visit homes to seek votes and gather suggestions, a process called canvassing.

Political parties share manifestos, outlining their plans if elected.

Some candidates, called Independents, aren't affiliated with any political party.

SILENT PROGRESSION IN



How do I vote?

The majority of people cast their votes at a polling station, typically located in a nearby school or hall.

Prior to the election, you'll receive a polling card in the post.

This tells you where to go to vote and the times that the polling station is open. It also tells you what identity documents to bring.

Bring identification to the polling station, as you might be asked for it.

You'll be given a ballot paper upon entering. This paper includes the names and photos of the candidates.

To cast your vote, you fill in the ballot paper by placing numbers in the boxes next to the names of the candidates.

For your first choice, you mark it with the number 1.

You can opt for just one candidate or choose as many as you prefer. If you decide to choose multiple candidates, you assign numbers like 1, 2, 3, 4, etc., in the boxes next to their names.

Once you've filled out your ballot paper, you place it in a box with all the other votes, and they are later counted. Importantly, you do not include your name, address, or any personal information on the ballot paper, ensuring the secrecy of your vote.

Scan the QR code for further information on voting:



Sample Ballot Paper:

TREORACHA

1. Scríobh an figiúr 1 sa bhosca le hais an chéad iarthóra is rogha leat, scríob an figiúr 2 sa bhosca le hais an dara hiarthóir is rogha leat, agus mar sin de.
2. Fill an páipéar ionas nach bhfeicfear do vóta. Taispeáin cúl an pháipéir don oifigeach ceannais, agus cuir sa bhosca ballóide é.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Write 1 in the box beside the candidate of your first choice, write 2 in the box beside the candidate of your second choice, and so on.
2. Fold the paper to conceal your vote. Show the back of the paper to the presiding officer and put it in the ballot box.

DOYLE – LIBERAL SOCIALISTS

MARY DOYLE, of 10 High Street, Knockmore, Nurse.



LYNCH – URBAN PARTY

JANE ELLEN LYNCH, of 12 Main Street, Ardstown, Shopkeeper.



MURPHY

PATRICK MURPHY, of 12 Main Street, Ballyduff, Carpenter.



Ó BRIAIN – CUMANN NA SAORÁNACH

SÉAMUS Ó BRIAIN, as 10 An tSráid Ard, Carn Mór, Oide Scoile.



O'BRIEN – NON-PARTY

EAMON O'BRIEN, of 22 Wellclose Place, Knockbeg, Barrister.

O'BRIEN – THE INDEPENDENT PARTY

ORLA O'BRIEN, of 103 Eaton Brae, Cahermore, Solicitor.



O'CONNOR – NATIONAL LEAGUE

CAROLINE O'CONNOR, of 7 Green Street, Carnmore, Engineer.



THOMPSON – RURAL PARTY

WILLIAM H. THOMPSON, of Dereen, Ballyglass, Farmer.



Are polling stations accessible?

Polling stations should be accessible to people with disabilities.

Voting compartments in polling stations are usually designed for people who are standing up. The returning officer must make a table and chair available for voters who need to sit down.

A public notice of all the polling stations in the constituency that are not accessible to wheelchair users will be given, which means a person who needs to, can vote at another place.

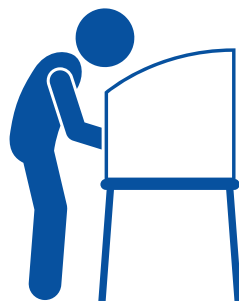
If you need to vote in another place you must write to the polling officer at least one week before the election.

What if I need assistance to vote?

If you have a visual impairment, a disability or a literacy difficulty that prevents you from voting without assistance you can be assisted in a number of ways:

Companion voting: You can bring a companion with you to mark the ballot paper for you, this person must be at least 16 years old and not affiliated with any candidate

Assistance from the presiding officer: The presiding officer asks how you want to vote and marks the ballot paper according to your preferences. They will read out any information from the ballot paper you may need to hear to make your decision.



Using a ballot paper template: A ballot paper template is a transparent plastic device that is placed on top of a ballot paper. The template has raised print and braille on it, so that visually impaired people can vote without assistance.

What if I can't go to a polling station?

If you live at home and you have a disability or illness that prevents you from going to a polling station, you may qualify to vote by post. You must apply to your local authority to be included in the Postal Voters List.

If you are living in a hospital, nursing home or similar institution and you have a disability or illness that prevents you from going to the polling station, you can vote at the hospital or nursing home. You must apply to your local authority to be included in the Special Voters List.

If you are on the current year's Postal or Special Voters List, you will generally get an application form in the post. If not, you can download one from checktheregister.ie. Forms are also available from all [local authorities](#), post offices, Garda stations and public libraries.

Scan the QR for further information for voters with disabilities:



Referendums:

A referendum is an alternative form of voting where you do not vote for individuals to represent you.

Instead, you cast a "YES" or "NO" vote in favor of or against a proposed change to our Constitution.

The Constitution outlines the rights of citizens and establishes fundamental laws.

Whenever the government introduces a new law, it must ensure that it aligns with the existing laws in the Constitution.

If the government needs to modify the constitution to implement a new law, a referendum is required for approval.

In a referendum, you express your opinion by marking an X in the box next to "YES" if you support the proposed change or next to "NO" if you oppose it.

Similar to voting in an election, you participate in a referendum at a polling station within a private voting booth.

For the proposed constitutional change to be adopted, more than 50% (half) of the participating voters must say "YES" in the referendum.

Scan the QR code to learn more about referendums:



Sample Ballot Paper:

An bhfuil tú ag toiliú leis an togra chun an Bunreacht a leasú atá sa Bhille thíosluaite?

Do you approve of the proposal to amend the Constitution contained in the undermentioned Bill?

An Bille um an Séú Leasú is Tríocha ar an mBunreacht, 2018

Thirty-sixth Amendment of the Constitution Bill 2018

Ná cuir marc **ach san aon chearnóg amháin**
Place a mark in **one square only**

Má thoilíonn tú, cuir X sa chearnóg seo

If you **approve**, mark X in this square

	Tá Yes
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Mura dtoilíonn tú, cuir X sa chearnóg seo

If you do **not approve**, mark X in this square.....

	Níl No
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Useful Links:

Check and see if you are registered to vote:

www.checktheregister.ie



Information about MS Ireland:

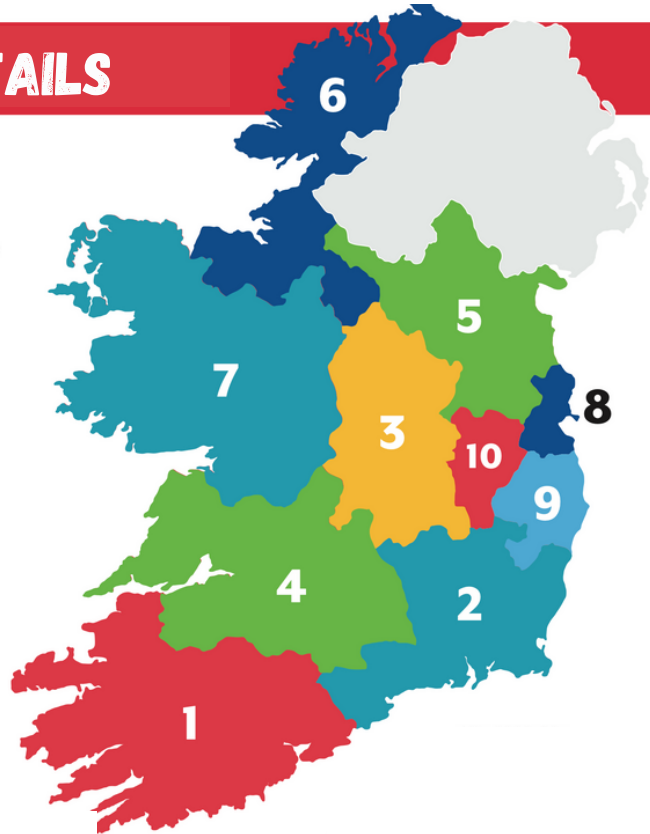
www.ms-society.ie



Your regional community worker can also provide you with support and information around voting and elections

REGIONAL CONTACT DETAILS

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1 SOUTHERN REGION
T: (021) 430 0001
E: southern@ms-society.ie | 6 NORTH WEST REGION
T: (074) 918 9027
E: northwestr@ms-society.ie |
| 2 SOUTH EAST REGION
T: (056) 777 7771
E: southeastr@ms-society.ie | 7 WESTERN REGION
T: (091) 768 630
E: westernr@ms-society.ie |
| 3 MIDLANDS REGION
T: (090) 647 1137
E: midlandsr@ms-society.ie | 8 DUBLIN NORTH & FINGAL REGION
T: (01) 490 5933
E: na@ms-society.ie |
| 4 MID WEST REGION
T: (061) 303 802
E: midwest@ms-society.ie | 9 SOUTH DUBLIN & EAST WICKLOW REGION
T: (01) 490 5933
E: eca@ms-society.ie |
| 5 NORTH EAST REGION
T: (042) 975 4304
E: northeast@ms-society.ie | 10 SOUTH WEST DUBLIN, KILDARE & WEST WICKLOW REGION
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